



# The Obesity Epidemic

## What is the problem?

The 1999 Youth Risk Behavior Survey indicates that among South Carolina high school students:

### Overweight

- 12% are overweight.<sup>1</sup>
- 13% are at risk for becoming overweight.<sup>2</sup>

### Unhealthy Dietary Behaviors

- 82% ate fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day during the past 7 days.

### Physical Inactivity

- 45% had not participated in sufficient vigorous physical activity during the past 7 days.<sup>3</sup>
- 78% had not participated in sufficient moderate physical activity during the past 7 days.<sup>4</sup>
- 13% had not participated in any vigorous or moderate physical activity during the past 7 days.
- 59% were not enrolled in a physical education class.
- 82% did not attend physical education class daily.

## What are the solutions?

Better health education • More physical education and physical activity • Healthier school environments

## What is the status?

The 2004 School Health Profiles indicates that among South Carolina middle/junior and senior high schools:

### Health Education

- Among schools that require health education, 36% require students to take two or more health education courses.
- 68% of schools teach 15 critical nutrition and dietary topics in a required health education course.
- 54% of schools teach 12 critical physical activity topics in a required health education course.

### Physical Education and Physical Activity

- Among schools that require physical education, 51% require students to take two or more physical education courses.
- 53% of schools with a required physical education course do not exempt students from taking physical education because they are enrolled in other courses or participate in sports or school activities.
- 58% of schools offer students intramural activities or physical activity clubs.

### School Environment

Among schools that allow students to purchase snack foods or beverages from vending machines or at the school store, canteen, or snack bar —

- 27% have fruits or vegetables available for purchase.
- 77% have 100% fruit juice available for purchase.
- 92% have bottled water available for purchase.
- 1% do not allow students to purchase candy; high fat snacks; or soft drinks, sports drinks, or fruit drinks that are not 100% juice during school lunch periods.

<sup>1</sup> ≥95th percentile for BMI by age and sex

<sup>2</sup> ≥85th percentile but <95th percentile for BMI by age and sex

<sup>3</sup> Participating in physical activities that made them sweat and breathe hard for ≥20 minutes on <3 of the past 7 days

<sup>4</sup> Participating in physical activities that did not make them sweat and breathe hard for ≥30 minutes on <5 of the past 7 days